

## Opioid Overdose Information for Schools

- In 2018 there were 1,533 unintentional overdose deaths in British Columbia – 232 of those deaths occurred in Interior Health communities. In youth aged 10-18 there were 18 deaths.
- We continue to be in the midst of a public health emergency, the impact of these deaths have implications on every community.
- BC Ministry of Health and the health authorities are working hard to ensure that we mobilize every effort to counteract these deaths. You can read more about Interior Health's overdose response on our [website](#).

### ***What can schools do?***

- The focus for youth aged 10-18 is on prevention and education.
- Recognize that evidence shows fear-based messaging is not effective at decreasing risk-taking behaviour and may prevent at-risk youth from reaching out for help.
- Build relationships with vulnerable youth. Relationships can open doors to providing education and addressing safety concerns.
- Have supportive conversations with students about the risks of overdose, how to recognize and respond to an overdose, and safer drug practices. See [Drug Education is Conversation](#) and [When Words Matter Guide](#).
- Provide information on the signs and symptoms of overdose and how to respond. See [Overdose Prevention Tip Sheet for more information](#).
- Schools wishing to have naloxone available onsite should be encouraged to complete a [Naloxone Risk Assessment \(public sector\)](#) to determine the risk of an overdose. If the school has a high risk population or is aware of students using drugs on or near the school grounds, it is recommended the school have a naloxone kit available and that staff are trained and comfortable administering naloxone in the event of an overdose.
- Contact your school [Public Health Nurse](#) for more information.

### ***Where can schools access Naloxone kits?***

- Schools who wish to have naloxone on site can purchase kits and receive training through some local pharmacies (the cost of a kit will vary but most are around \$50.00). Schools can also order kits from the Government of BC Product Distribution Centre (PDC) – [see page 8 in Naloxone Risk Assessment tool](#) for contact information. Kits may be less expensive when purchased through the government distribution centre.
- Schools should also ensure they have proper overdose response protocols in place including a training plan (including refreshers) and policies/procedures for recognizing and responding to an overdose which should include support for staff responding to an overdose post-incident.

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- Pharmacists may provide training on how to use the kits. (In some communities, Interior Health Public Health Nurses may also be able to provide training.)
- Further education and videos for staff are available online at [Toward the Heart.com](http://www.towardtheheart.com).

#### ***What students are considered at risk?***

- Any student that uses illicit substances could be at risk for overdose.
- Any student that mixes alcohol with other illicit substances could be at risk.
- Any student that has a history of overdose could be at risk.
- Overdose recognition and response education is appropriate for any student who could potentially witness an overdose.

#### ***Where can I refer an at-risk youth for a Naloxone Kit?***

- Find [Harm Reduction sites](#) in B.C.

#### ***Where can I access teaching material and curriculum on opioid overdose?***

- Four new teacher resources for grades 6 - 11 have been developed by the Canadian Institute of Substance Use Research (CISUR) with funding provided by the Ministry of Health. They include: The Giver (Grades 6-8); The Hunger Games (Grade 7-9); Pain Medications: Benefits and Risks (Grade 9); and Opioid Use: Deconstructing Media Messages (Grade 11). To access these resources see [iMinds Resources](#).
- Supportive education and resources are available for schools on the [BC provincial website](#).
- Interior Health [Overdose Prevention Tip Sheet](#).
- 12 minute video [Naloxone Saves Lives](#).

#### ***What can we share with parents?***

- Supportive education and resources have been made available for parents on the provincial website: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/overdose/talking-to-youth>.
- Additional resources for parents <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/substance-use>
- Overdoses Awareness BC <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/overdose>
- Parenting: The Drugs Question <https://www.uvic.ca/research/centres/cisur/assets/docs/hs-parents-list.pdf>.
- Drug Education is Conversation <https://www.uvic.ca/research/centres/cisur/assets/docs/hs-pp-conversation.pdf>
- Drug Education is Health Promotion <https://www.uvic.ca/research/centres/cisur/assets/docs/hs-drug-education-as-health-promotion.pdf>



- Parent resources on how to talk to kids, teens and adult children about substance use and overdose  
<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/substance-use/parenting-articles> .